

Message Text

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ORIGIN EA-14

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DRAFTED BY EA/P:STAFF:PP
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----- 060512

R 022325Z APR 74
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY SAIGON
INFO ALL EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS
USSAGE NKP
CINCPAC
COGARD
AMCONSUL BIEN HOA
AMCONSUL CAN THO
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMCONSUL NHA TRANG
USDEL JEC PARIS
XMT AMEMBASSY SUVA

UNCLAS STATE 066445

COGARD FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS:PFOR, XC, US
SUBJECT:APRIL 2 EA PRESS SUMMARY

INDOCHINA

1. BINDER (NYT) REVIEWS HAK LETTER AND KENNEDY
COMMENTS ON US COMMITMENTS TO INDOCHINA. QUOTES
DOS SPOKESMAN'S DENIAL THAT LETTER STATED "NEW
COMMITMENTS" OF AID TO SVN -- THAT LETTER "SIMPLY
REAFFIRMED COMMITMENTS WE ALREADY HAVE." SPOKESMAN
DEFINES COMMITMENTS AS "LEGAL ..., NO - ...MORAL-
UNCLASSIFIED

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POLITICAL ..., YES." KENNEDY AIDE SAYS SENATE
WILL PROBABLY HOLD HEARINGS ON US INVOLVEMENT IN
VN THIS SPRING.

2. GROUP OF BUDDHIST AND OTHER ANTI-COMMUNIST GVN OPPONENTS MARCHED THROUGH SAIGON TO NAT'L ASS'Y BUILDING -- IN FIRST DEMONSTRATION THERE IN TWO YEARS -- TO PETITION SPEAKER. THEY WANT PERMISSION GO TO LOC NINH TO AID STUDENT AND INTELLECTUAL "SELF-PROCLAIMED MEMBERS OF THIRD FORCE" WHO CHOSE POLITICAL EXILE IN VC AREA RATHER THAN RETURN TO SAIGON DURING POW EXCHANGE (REUTER, NYT).

3. FIELD REPORTS SAY COMMUNISTS WITHDRAW FROM DUC HUE CAMP WITH HEAVY LOSSES AFTER ARVN REINFORCEMENTS

ARRIVE (UPI, BALTO N-A 4/1). GVN MIL COMMAND REPORTS 59 VC AND 12 GVN MILITIAMEN KIA IN TWO SHARP DELTA CLASHES (WP; AP, NYT).

4. MCCOMBS (WP) FROM SAIGON REPORTS 11 VIET LANDLORDS HAVE RETAINED COUNSEL IN DC AND FILED PETITIONS IN US COURT OF CLAIMS FOR OVER ONE MILLION DOLLARS IN EXTRA RENT THEY CLAIM IS DUE. MOST CLAIMS CONCERN VILLAS, HOTELS AND APARTMENT BUILDINGS USED BY USG, BUT ONE INVOLVES FORMER FAMOUS "CHOLON PX." SUITS BASED ON "ESCALATOR" CLAUSES IN LEASES TO INCREASE RENTS WITH CHANGE IN VALUE OF PIASTER. DEVALUATIONS OCCURRED BUT USG DID NOT PAY MORE RENT, TAKING OFFICIAL POSITION THAT GVN MAINTAINED MULTIPLE EXCHANGE RATES AND USG WAS NOT BOUND TO FOLLOW INCREASES IN "BANK" RATE. VIET SOURCES SAY MACV IN 1968 HAD 633 LEASES AND 20-30 HAD ESCALATOR CLAUSES, WHILE USAID AND EMBASSY ALSO HAD MANY LEASES EACH. SAME SOURCES SAY MOST PROPERTY USED BY USG, SUCH AS MIL BASES AND AIRFIELDS, WAS LENT FREE BY GVN, AND THAT GVN PRESSURED USG NOT TO PAY HIGH RENTS DURING HEIGHT OF WAR SINCE WOULD HAVE ADDED TO ECON UPSET. WHEN US FORCES LEFT, LENT PROPERTY (WITH IMPROVEMENTS) WAS RETURNED TO GVN CONTROL, LEASE SETTLEMENTS WERE NEGOTIATED, AND US EMBASSY SET UP OFFICE TO HANDLE UNCLASSIFIED

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CLAIMS INVOLVING REAL ESTATE AND OTHER TRANSACTIONS. MCCOMBS CITES "SOURCES FAMILIAR WITH THE CASE" THAT VICTORY FOR 11 PRESENTLY SUING MIGHT LEAD TO ADDITIONAL CLAIMS TOTALING MORE MILLIONS; QUOTES US OFFICIALS THAT THEY ARE "NOT PARTICULARLY CONCERNED" ABOUT POSSIBILITY OF MORE SUITS, AND THAT THEY RESIST GVN SUGGESTION THAT EMBASSY NOW PAY FOR USE OF PROPERTY IN SAIGON THAT IT HAS "ALWAYS RECEIVED FREE USE OF."

5. JANE FONDA AND TOM HAYDEN ARRIVE AT HANOI. BELIEVED THAT THEY INTEND TO MAKE DOCUMENTARY FILM (AFP, WP; KREBS, NYT). DRV BEGINS ITS FIRST OFFICIAL

CENSUS SINCE 1960 (WP).

6. RLG SOURCES SAY SOUPHANOUVONG EXPECTED IN VIENTIANE WITHIN TWO DAYS TO PUT FINISHING TOUCHES ON COALITION AGREEMENT (UPI BALTO N-A 4/1, NYDN). DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAY NEW GOV'T. MIGHT BE INSTALLED BY FRIDAY WITH SOUVANNA AS PREMIER, SOUPHANOUVONG AS ONE OF TWO DEPUTY PREMIERS, AND RLG AND PL HAVING FIVE CABINET POSTS EACH AND NEUTRALISTS TWO. PRINCES EXPECTED TO MEET WEDS., FLY TO LUANG PRABANG THURS.

FOR AUDIENCE WITH KING (AP, NYT; CHITRIB). SENIOR PL OFFICIAL PHOUMI VONGVICHIT SAYS RLG AND PL AGREE ON NEW CABINET, WILL PRESENT LIST TO KING FOR APPROVAL (WP).

7. DOS OFFICIALS NOTE THAT CONGRESS IMPOSED 200-MAN CEILING ON AMEMBASSY PP US STAFF, STATE ABOUT 200 THERE NOW DIVIDED ABOUT EQUALLY BETWEEN CIVILIAN AND MILITARY, SAY NO PLANS EXIST TO INCREASE NUMBER (NYT).

8. GKR COMMAND ANNOUNCES THAT FANK WITH ARTILLERY, AIR AND APC SUPPORT BEGINS COUNTEROFFENSIVE TO RETAKE OUDONG (UPI, NYT). MIL SOURCES SAY FANK DEFENDERS HOLD OFF REBEL ASSAULT ON EASTERN APPROACHES TO KAMPOT (WP).

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CHINA

9. CAMBODIA REBEL COMMANDER KHIEU RECEIVES PEKING WELCOME USUALLY RESERVED FOR HEADS OF STATE; GREETED BY CHOU EN-LAI AT AIRPORT. AT BANQUET HELD IN HIS HONOR, KHMER SAID CAMBODIA SOLUTION POSSIBLE ONLY AFTER ENDING OF ALL US AID TO LON NOL (REUTER, NYT; WP). SUN'S ISAACS, IN HK, NOTES THAT AT BANQUET CHOU, IN ONE OF "STRONGEST" CHINESE STATEMENTS ON INDOCHINA IN MANY MONTHS, ACCUSED US OF INSTIGATING SVN C-F VOLATIONS AND MAINTAINING WAR OF AGGRESSION IN CAMBODIA.

10. OBSERVERS IN PEKING SURPRISED THAT OFFICIAL PRC DOCUMENT PRAISING LIN PIAO, ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN 1968, IS AGAIN AVAILABLE THERE IN LOBBY OF HOTEL FOR FOREIGNERS (WP).

11. SOVIET MONTHLY REVIEW "INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS" CHARGED MONDAY THAT "MAOISTS" ARE ATTEMPTING TO HEIGHTEN USSR-US TENSION TO "BRINK OF WAR, IF NOT TO A DIRECT MILITARY COLLISION" (AP, PHINQ).

12. REUTER PEKING REPORTS FLICK OF CIGARETTE LIGHTER BY TEENAGE DAUGHTER OF ITALIAN DIPLOMAT RECENTLY PROVOKED ANGRY RESPONSE FROM CHINESE WHO THOUGHT SHE WAS TAKING THEIR PHOTO, ACCORDING DIPLOMATIC SOURCES. CROWD REPORTEDLY CONFINED GIRL AND HER THREE COMPANIONS (ONE BELGIAN, TWO LEBANESE) INSIDE THEIR AUTO, WHICH HAD DIPLOMATIC PLATES, FOR ABOUT 30 MINUTES, BANGING ON THEIR WINDOW AND BREAKING OFF METAL FLAG POLE. RESCUE EVENTUALLY EFFECTED

BY PRC PUBLIC SECURITY OFFICIAL, WHO EXPLAINED POLITELY THAT CHINESE PEOPLE ARE EXTREMELY SENSITIVE ABOUT CAMERAS BECAUSE OF CURRENT PRESS ATTACKS ON ANTONIONI. NEWSWEEK REPORTS PRC HAS ASKED COMPENSATION FOR SEVERAL SHIPMENTS OF ALLEGEDLY FUNGUS-TAINTED US WHEAT; ADDS THAT USDA OFFICIALS CONCEDE SOME OF 60,000 TONS WERE AFFLICTED WITH FUNGUS TCK (CSM). NYT'S MAIDENBERG SAYS REPORTS OF FUNGUS-TAINTED US WHEAT SHIPMENTS UNCLASSIFIED

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TO CHINA HELPED FURTHER UNSETTLE MIDWEST GRAIN MARKETS MONDAY. NOTES THAT PRC IS NOT ONLY RAPIDLY BECOMING MAJOR CUSTOMER FOR US FARM PRODUCE, BUT ALSO HAS INDICATED INTEREST IN EXCHANGING PETROLEUM FOR FOOD-STUFFS AND COTTON.

13. JOC'S STRAUSS REPORTS THAT FRG CONSORTIUM'S SALE OF HUGE STEEL COMPLEX TO PRC IS SEEN IN HK AS INDICATION THAT MODERATE ECON LEADERS ARE STILL IN CONTROL IN PEKING AND THAT CURRENT IDEOLOGICAL CAMPAIGN WILL END IN YEAR OR LESS. PRC AGREES TO PROVIDE TANZANIA INTEREST-FREE LOAN OF ABOUT 75 MILLION DOLS OVER NEXT 5 YEARS TO DEVELOP COAL AND IRON ORE MINES IN SOUTH OF COUNTRY AND LINK THEM WITH RAILWAY (GLOBE, CSM).

JAPAN

14. REUTER YOKOHAMA REPORTS VC TABLE TENNIS TEAM, MARCHING IN JUNGLE GREEN COMBAT UNIFORMS BEHIND SIGN READING "REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM," RECEIVED BIGGEST OVATION AT OPENING OF SECOND ASIAN TABLE TENNIS CHAMPIONSHIPS MONDAY -- BUT ACTION OF 17-MEMBER TEAM APPEARED LIKELY TO SET OFF DIPLOMATIC ROW. JAPAN, HOST COUNTRY, RECOGNIZES GVN, NOT VC, AS REPUBLIC OF (SOUTH) VN, AND GOJ SOURCES SAID JUSTICE MINISTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS FOR COMPETING TEAMS, APPEARS DISSATISFIED WITH WAY VC HAD APPEARED. BUT JUSTICE MINISTRY OFFICIALS SAID NO DECISION ON WHAT ACTION SHOULD
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